

The Futility of Fosterism

BY
BEN LEGERE



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INTRODUCTION.

In putting the following articles together in pamphlet form I have chosen as the title "The Futility of Fosterism" because they constitute a record of the American Federation of Labor during the past three years; and the one outstanding fact revealed by a study of the course of the policy advocated by Wm. Z. Foster, of trying to make the A. F. of L. a working class labor movement.

Sixteen years ago I joined the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, as hundreds of thousands of workers have joined various international unions of the A. F. of L., under the impression that I was joining a genuine labor organization, to better my condition as a worker.

In a short time I discovered that this union was not a real labor union at all but merely a "common union" being used by the railroad companies to keep the clerks from organizing, in any way that might be effective for them, by providing them with what seemed to be a labor union but what was in reality an organization machine carefully controlled by the companies.

Like several million other American workers have done, I left the A. F. of L. in disgust when I discovered the corruption and the iron-bound company control. But I did not abandon my efforts to carry on the fight of the worker versus the boss as activity in the I.W.W. with years of jail and prison service can testify.

When I discovered that the A. F. of L. is not a workers' organization, though it is true that workers constitute the rank and file membership, I could see no reason why I should spend time and energy and dues in support of such a company-controlled organization when it was the obvious duty of every honest worker to be striving to build a real labor movement in America.

The theory that such a labor movement can be built out of the A. F. of L. has been advocated for a generation. It has been tried out over and over again and has always failed. Foster himself tried it out years ago when he organized the North American Syndicalist League and he found then that it would not work. The result of all efforts to alter the A. F. of L. so that it might become a real labor movement has been failure for those who tried it with consequent discouragement and demoralization or at the most the formation of innumerable "independent" unions.

The underlying impulse of the workers themselves has always been toward One Big Union.

The I.W.W. came nearest to realizing that goal but the I.W.W. began outside the A. F. of L. being in its origin an attempt to unite a number of those "independent" unions. I stayed with the I.W.W. until I was convinced that we had theorized too much, had undertaken a much more pretentious thing than it was possible to accomplish, when we set out to organize something that would live up to the all-embracing name "Industrial Workers of the World." I concluded we had "bitten off more than

we could chew." But the idea of One Big Union was a much simpler thing and a thing that can be realized.

The year 1919 brought the realization of that possibility nearer than it has ever been in America since the A. F. of L. and the iron and steel masters backed by the rest of the employing class in this country, broke up the old Knights of Labor forty years ago.

In 1919 a great insurgent movement was sweeping through the unions of the A. F. of L. that had for its goal, One Big Union. Where that movement took definite shape and became coherent the programme advocated was SECESSION of local unions from their various Internationals and the formation of One Big Union.

This movement was most advanced in Western Canada and the One Big Union of Canada was the result.

It was formed by the SECESSION of most of the local unions in the four western provinces of Canada and when it was launched in June, 1919, it not only laid the foundation of a real labor movement but at the same time it practically wiped out the A. F. of L. in western Canada and made it impossible for that organization to ever again mobilize the mass of the workers in that part of the country in a union controlled by the boss. Though the A. F. of L. fought hard to recover that lost ground and had the help of the employers and the government and spent many hundreds of thousands of dollars, it has never been able to re-establish its prestige in Western Canada.

Though every effort has been made to destroy the Canadian O.B.U., it has lived through the storm and today constitutes the firmest foundation upon which a labor movement may be built on this continent.

The strange thing about what we will call "Fosterism" in this pamphlet is that it was suddenly revived in the United States in 1920 just as the influence of the Western Canadian secession movement was beginning to be felt on the American side of the border.

It was a time when the million and a half of workers that have since dropped out of the A. F. of L. were in rebellion and beginning to tear at the bonds that tied them up in the capitalist-controlled Internationals of the A. F. of L.

Instead of promoting the SECESSION movement toward the One Big Union, Foster and those who followed him began a frenzied campaign to convince the insurgent unionists that they should "stay in the A. F. of L."

Why such a policy was adopted at that time may never be satisfactorily explained but three years of it had demonstrated its futility, because the "insurgents" did not "stay in the A. F. of L." and the only effect the propaganda of that idea has had was to side-track the tendency toward SECESSION and the formation of a real labor movement, WITHOUT SAVING THAT STRENGTH OF NUMBERS FOR THE A. F. of L.

The master class on this continent, terror-stricken as it was by the swing toward One Big Union that began in Winnipeg in 1919, must be highly amused today by the propaganda of "Fosterism."

In Canada, however, the Foster idea proved to be a more serious thing than in the United States because there the workers had made their

start. SECESSION had actually been accomplished and a real labor movement launched. Then came the idea of "back to the A. F. of L." and "bofe from within." The idea was expressed through the Workers' Party of Canada and that organization has covered its early history with inglorious infamy by devoting most of its energy to an effort to destroy the O.B.U.

The followers of Foster in Canada, have for two years allowed themselves to be made the pawns of the Canadian plutocracy in their destructive campaign against the O.B.U. in a country where the O.B.U. was the ONLY LABOR ORGANIZATION THAT STOOD BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE ORGANIZED ASSAULT AND EXPLOITATION OF THE EMPLOYERS.

How many were stool-pigeons of the employers and what part they played in shaping the policies of the Workers' Party and Trade Union Educational League movements in Canada may never be known, but those of us who know they are always present in every "wing" of the workers' movement realize how viciously they have played their game with the followers of Foster.

I am not suggesting here that Foster and the other genuine zealots for his theories of labor organization are responsible for the activities of such agents any more than they are responsible for the Department of Justice stool-pigeon that wormed his way into their Executive Council and brought about the Bridgeman, Michigan, raid, which may yet result in sending some good men to prison.

The employers will combat ALL phases of the working class movement and use ALL weapons in that struggle; but those of us who understand these things ought to be extremely careful in the course we take to advance pet theories at the possible expense of injury to a real working class organization.

I have not attempted to deal with Foster's theories in these articles. I merely point to the record of the A. F. of L. over the past three years and picture the condition of that alleged labor movement as shown by its conventions in evidence of the utter futility of the Foster programme.

Those who are given to theorizing might require a refutation of the Foster philosophy before they could be convinced that the thing will not work, but the unionist who is also a realist will take cognizance of the results achieved over a reasonable period of time and for such the record of these three years should be enough. That record as shown here is one of complete failure and those workers who have faithfully followed the slogans of Foster, applied the medicine prescribed and found that it kills instead of cures will now have the opportunity of acknowledging their error. They will frankly admit that they have tried the plan out and found by their own experience that the A. F. of L. cannot be used by the workers.

The logical step then is to abandon it and join with the rest of us in building an American labor movement that will be worthy the name.

For the theorists I would suggest a little more careful analysis of the cardinal principles of the Foster philosophy.

Just what is there to this magnified bogey of "dual unionism" that so much is said about?

Is it really a fact that the so-called "radicals" cause the insurgency within the A. F. of L.?

Starting with these a score of pertinent questions might be asked and when answered the T.U.E.L. will go the way of the North American Syndicalist League.

AT THE MORGUE IN MONTREAL.

(This article was written in June, 1920, after the A. F. of L. convention in Montreal.)

A few years ago Duncan MacDonald of the United Mine Workers of America, rose at a convention of the American Federation of Labor and declared that, "The American Federation of Labor is moribund, fossilized, worm-eaten, dead." He had long been one of its shining lights and he ought to know.

A year ago, John Reed, writing about the Convention of the American Federation in Atlantic City, referred to it as the "Convention of the Dead." The feeling that such expressions were but partisan phrases caused me to come to the Convention in Montreal with the expectation of hearing a lively discussion of some of the vital issues of the American labor movement on the part of at least some of the delegates to that convention.

After sitting through ten days of the "deliberations" I am forced to the conclusion that they didn't tell the half of it and that the body has been dead so long and embalmed so poorly that it has become a positive menace to the public health and ought to be taken out somewhere and buried.

The fact that the Province of Quebec has no such thing as a "health act" and is sadly deficient in the matter of sanitary provisions, together with the quantities of alcohol placed at the disposal of the delegates to serve as embalming fluid probably accounts for the toleration of the Canadian people in allowing the corpse to be exposed for so long in Montreal without protest.

In the Presence of Death

The conviction that I was a visitor at a morgue was borne in upon me so indelibly day after day as I watched the proceedings that I began to feel I could catch the odor of the undertaking parlor the moment I entered the St. Denis theatre where the gathering was held. However, it may have been only the fumes of the somewhat more than three per cent. arising from the corpulence of the convention that caused my senses to react so readily to the suggestion that even the smell of the morgue was there.

In all seriousness, though, I am certain of this, that could the Canadian workers have had a few more conventions of the American Federation of Labor in their midst in recent years they would have started the One Big Union long before they did.

I find myself wondering whether any previous convention of the A. F. of L. could have been quite as bad as this and why the workers of America have persisted so long in dragging this dead body along with them in their struggle toward a better life.

But when I read the reports that have gone out from this convention, romantic pictures of a conclave of capable advocates of the cause of Labor and contrast them with the pale reality, it becomes clear that a clever camouflage is carried out through this annual exhibition.

Through the convenient medium of the capitalist press the great weakness of labor in North America is covered with a smoke-screen of convention proceedings calculated to impress the people with the strength and power of the "g-r-r-reat American Labor Movement."

A Convention of Officials

It is hard to look down into the morgue that has been made of the stage and orchestra floor of the St. Denis theatre and think of Labor. Surely there must be some mistake. These fat figures behind the rows of white slabs that serve as desks cannot be working people. And it is well to understand from the outset that they are not. Of the 573 delegates to the convention of the A. F. of L., 316 are representatives of International and National Unions. Most of these representatives are salaried officials of these unions. The Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers are pretty nearly all filling places as delegates and those who are not high officials are all lesser officials or organizers.

The remaining 259 delegates are heads of State Federations of Labor and Central Labor Unions with a few officials of Federal Unions. It is doubtful if there can be found half a dozen delegates in the hall that work in the industries of this continent.

Among these salaried officials are many whose salary exceeds \$10,000 per year and the lowest paid among them receive wages of at least \$50 per week with an allowance of \$6 per day for expenses. And there are but few in that category.

Scores of these delegates have held these high salaried offices in the A. F. of L. for years and years. Many of these International Officers are men of wealth with blocks of stock to their credit and large interests in prosperous business concerns. Scores of them for years and years have performed no more arduous toil than to attend conventions, like this, make speeches at banquets and social and political functions, junket about the country to conferences and affairs of little moment. Hardly any of them ever do anything more strenuous than drop into their offices for an hour or two now and then and sign letters and look over the balance sheets of their bookkeepers and clerks to see whether the per capita tax is coming in steadily enough to enable them to be relieved of any worry about their annual stipend.

To expect such men to be concerned with the real problems of the wage-workers is manifestly absurd. Their chief concern can only be that of keeping themselves secure in the enjoyment of the easy comfortable existence that has come to them as a consequence of their parasitic position in the Labor Movement.

GOMPERS' "GREAT AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT" EXPELS THE MILITANT MINORITY.

My approach to the forty-third annual convention of the American Federation of Labor at Portland, Oregon, where I am now enjoying the show from a seat in the gallery, was made by way of Seattle, Wash.

Stopping a while in Seattle gave me an opportunity to observe the condition of the so-called "American Labor movement" in what has long been regarded as its most progressive and most hopeful centre.

The tragedy of labor in the United States is very well illustrated by the sad condition of Seattle.

I had been in Seattle in the spring of 1919 when the wage-workers of that city made the most effective demonstration of solidarity that has ever been made in any city in the United States by workers organized in the A. F. of L.

At that time the labor unions of Seattle, acting together through the Central Labor Council, pretty well tied up the industries of the city for a few days by a General Strike.

Although the Seattle General Strike did not assume anything approaching the extent and effectiveness of the great Winnipeg strike of the same year, it was, nevertheless, the most progressive move ever made through an A. F. of L. Central Labor Council in the United States.

If there is hope in the A. F. of L. one would naturally expect to see some rays of it in Seattle, but there is nothing there today to cheer one with the thought that this centre may become a stronghold of an advancing workers' movement.

The Seattle Central Labor Council is today in the act of crawling and cringing before the autocratic Gompers machine which is chastizing that body, humiliating it and making an example of it for the approval of all the labor-hating exploiters of the country and particularly of the Northwest and for the intimidation of other rebel Central Labor Councils of the A. F. of L. wherever they may be found.

SEATTLE LABOR MOVEMENT SHOT TO PIECES

In 1919 behind the Seattle Central Labor Council stood a force of more than 60,000 organized workers, militant and courageous. Today less than 20,000 remain and the militancy and courage has been so thoroughly stamped out that the Chamber of Commerce in that sad city crows with glee over the spinelessness of labor there and boasts of the freedom from strikes that Seattle enjoys.

In 1919 I found Seattle a beehive of union activity. One became well aware of the power of organized labor in the community five minutes after stepping from the train. Evidences of it were on every hand. Today in Seattle one gets the feeling of being in a stronghold of "open-shoppers."

In 1919 labor was respected in Seattle and in spite of the ranting of Ole Hanson on safe platforms in other cities, he and his kind were very quiet and tame at home. In fact it was so uncomfortable for Ole in Seattle that he moved to Los Angeles which then had the reputation of being America's star scab-town. Ole might safely return to Seattle now,

for Seattle is fast approaching the condition that gave Los Angeles its reputation.

Today in Seattle, the aggressiveness and boastfulness of all the labor-hating forces is growing by leaps and bounds and it may not be long before Chamber of Commerce inspired lynching-bees may dispose of any remaining vestige of militancy that may be left in that city.

In fact the only sign of life I found in the Seattle labor movement was at the I.W.W. headquarters, where lumber-workers and other migratory workers, making Seattle their center on their way to and from the jobs in the camps, keep things stirring and save Seattle from seeming absolutely hopeless.

In 1919 the Seattle unionists were publishing a daily paper, the "Union Record," that was easily the best labor newspaper in America, but today the Union Record is one of the yellowest rags in the country, catering to every element that a Hearst newspaper caters to with a degree of inefficiency in its efforts to imitate a Hearst sheet that makes its degeneracy one of the saddest things I've seen in labor journalism.

GOMPERS APPLIES THE WHIP TO SEATTLE

The collapse of the Seattle labor movement echoed through the opening days of this convention in Portland because Gompers and his Executive Council in session just previous to the opening of the convention were engaged in the task of driving the final nails into the coffin of the Seattle Central Labor Council.

For several months the chastizing of Seattle labor has been going on, and on the opening day of the convention the Executive Council's hearing of the Seattle case concluded with the ultimatum in which the Seattle unionists are given thirty days to make a public repudiation of all their progressive policies or have the charter of the Central Labor Council revoked.

The whole story of Seattle is too long to relate in this article but the substance of the A. F. of L. ultimatum is that Seattle must repudiate its endorsement of a demand for recognition of Soviet Russia, repudiate its action in sending Hulet M. Wells to the Congress of the Moscow Internationale, repudiate its endorsement of the Farmer-Labor Party and generally promise to support "all the policies of the Federation in all national and international relations and policies."

In 1919 the Seattle Central Labor Council was doing things much more annoying to the officialdom of the A. F. of L. than the political activities and expression which is now complained of but in 1919 Gompers and his hierarchy of International officials did not dare to discipline Seattle. Had they tried it in that year, 60,000 workers back of the militant Seattle Central Labor Council would have pretty nearly put the A. F. of L. out of commission in this country. The revocation of their charter then would have been met by a movement with enough guts to go ahead to the formation of a real labor movement and hundreds of thousands of other workers then in the A. F. of L., learning its true character, would have followed them.

Gompers knew this because that was the year that his henchmen in the Internationals tried disciplining a similar militant Central Labor

quotations from the Butte Bulletin, edited by Dunne as well as some letters written by Dunne to Fred Merrick of Pittsburg and seized by Department of Justice agents in raids made when Merrick was arrested in that city. The manner in which Green secures quotations from letters seized by Department of Justice agents will probably be as hard for him to explain as were the questions raised by Dunne.

Following Green's attack, Philip Murray, Vice-President of the Mine Workers, with an equally venomous speech made the motion to unseat Dunne as a delegate.

A SPLENDID FIGHTING SPEECH

Gompers then allowed Dunne to answer his accusers and I want to record that the speech that followed was the most masterly arraignment of the A. F. of L. officialdom that I have ever listened to. Dunne certainly "bored from within" and bored so efficiently that he bored a hole and let himself out. It was a splendid, fearless answer, retracting nothing, apologizing for nothing, amplifying his accusations against the gang of labor fakirs around him until they writhed and fumed in their seats. The accusation made by Dunne that Lewis is now trying to deliver the Herrin miners, acquitted by a jury, up to the hangman remains unanswered by Lewis and Green. In fact none of the charges made by Dunne were answered and in an interchange of questions and answers after Dunne finished his speech, Green was only saved from an embarrassing situation by the gavel of Gompers.

After a recess in which the machine mobilized its forces for a smashing retaliation upon Dunne for his daring to hurl the truth so boldly into the faces of the autocrats of the "American labor movement" the miners played their trump card.

Fred Mooney, of West Virginia, took the floor and in a speech made almost incoherent by its wildness and raving supported the demand for Dunne's expulsion from the convention.

A PITIFUL BETRAYAL

It was one of the saddest spectacles I have ever seen when Mooney, the militant fighting miner, with a clean and courageous record in the labor movement lined up in support of Lewis and Green.

The explanation of it is too obvious to need comment. In a month Mooney himself faces a jury on the charge of murder in West Virginia. It is well known that without the support of the Lewis treasury the heroic West Virginia miners would face the West Virginia hangman without adequate defense. Lewis is not only trying to deliver up the Herrin miners to the Illinois hangman but he holds the noose over the neck of an honest, militant worker in the cause of Labor until he perjures his soul in the defense of the corruption of the Lewis official machine.

So confident and aggressive were the heresy-hunters after the speeches of Mooney and a few others that Hutcheson of the Carpenters demanded a roll call vote so that every delegate who dared to vote against the unseating of Dunne might be marked for further slaughter.

The seven besides Dunne, who dared to register their "no's" will no doubt soon feel the weight of the official iron heel.

NO SIGN OF THE BORERS

Dunne left the convention hall, and the labor allies of the American plutocracy settled back with satisfaction to dispose of obnoxious resolutions and enjoy, undisturbed by any further evidence of insurgency, their forty-third annual smoke, talk and booze fest.

The resolutions on amalgamation were quickly voted down without discussion, the only voice heard upon the subject being that piping tenor of the whipped "radical" Duncan from Seattle, who rose to assure the "fat boys" that he was with them in their fight against amalgamation and all of Foster's works and had really always been with them.

I looked forward to the complete crushing of every sign of progressiveness within the A. F. of L. during the days remaining before this convention ends. In my next article I will sum up the doings of this gang that I have long contended do not represent Labor in America and are maintained in their present masquerade as the "American Labor Movement" only by capitalist consent and collusion.

I shall also try to find some explanation of the strange phenomena of men like William F. Dunne, whose fearless, uncompromising arraignment of this convention shook it more than it has been stirred in all its forty-three years, taking the position that it was the convention of the American Labor movement he was addressing.

I can think of no more convincing argument for the One Big Union programme of building a real labor movement on this continent upon a rank and file basis than the experience of Dunne in this convention. It should not take many more such conventions to convince the workers of the futility of "boring from within."

PORTLAND CONVENTION PUTRID WITH RANK RE-ACTION

Establishing a new record for re-action, the forty-third annual convention of the American Federation of Labor at Portland, Oregon, has just gone through the usual ceremony of electing Gompers president for another term and adjourned until next year, when the "gang" gets together again at El Paso, Texas.

Why El Paso was picked out may be the subject of some comment in passing. Probably because it will take this bunch of labor fakirs further away from the American working class and certainly because it will bring them nearer to unlimited booze, which is one of the ideals for which this alleged labor organization always makes a valiant fight.

El Paso sent a committee of politicians to Portland to lobby for the convention. The condition of some of the delegates that voted for El Paso was a testimonial to the effectiveness of the kick in the stuff the committee brought up from the Mexican border.

It was also argued that the Mexican Federation of Labor would arrange to hold its convention at the same time on the other side of the river. In view of the fact that American capitalists seeking the opportunity to exploit Mexican resources and Mexican labor are now making every effort to curb the "Reds" in the Mexican labor movement, it may be their hope that Gompers will be an effective aid to the Obregon government in that campaign.

This may be surmised in view of the fact that the outstanding feature of this A. F. of L. convention was the bold attack it made on "Bolshevism." It may even be said that the only important business transacted at Portland was the placing of the Federation on record as unqualifiedly against Bolshevism and in favor of beer.

BEER BRINGS OUT ORATORY

The discussion on the resolution in favor of "light wines and beer" took up nearly as much time as was given to the unseating of Delegate "Bill" Dunne, the lone Communist champion in the convention.

That was not because there was any real opposition to beer, as only one delegate recorded himself as against the beer resolution and he was publicly repudiated by the rest of his International delegation. It seemed however as though a great many delegates had pledged the brewers that they would fight for the resolution on the floor and so many speeches were made by delegates who had remained silent for ten days.

The quality and flavor of these speeches revealed the high degree of intellectual attainment of these fat misleaders of labor and fully justified Dunne's charge that Gompers has always taken care to keep any vestige of intellect from developing among the officialdom of the international unions that compose his labor machine.

The orations in favor of beer should all be published by the bootleggers and distributed as propaganda for their cause to show the low order of intelligence possessed by the opponents of their calling.

The worst thing that can be said against the wage-workers on the American continent is that they are to blame for the display of ignorance and incompetence made by these delegates of labor at Portland.

PROGRESSIVES ALMOST WIPED OUT

The other outstanding achievement of the convention, namely, the "crushing of Bolshevism," was followed up by the defeat of every progressive resolution introduced.

The attempt to get the A. F. of L. to endorse a Farmer-Labor Party was defeated by a roll call vote of 25,066 votes to 1,895.

Resolutions asking for the recognition of Soviet Russia found half a dozen delegates with enough courage to speak in favor of them, but when the vote was taken it was so overwhelmingly against recognition that the attempt to get a roll call vote was laughed out of the convention.

The most crushing defeat of all the progressives came on the various resolutions favoring "amalgamation." The report of the committee on these resolutions was not only one of non-concurrence but the committee saw fit to add a vigorous denunciation of the "amalgamationists" as "sinister agents, propagandists and destructionists of a foreign foe" and called upon the convention to reaffirm the principles of "craft unionism."

So thoroughly subdued were the so-called progressive forces that not one rose to speak in favor of the "amalgamation" resolutions. Dunne, the only delegate in the convention who would have had guts enough to fight for the idea had been expelled from the convention earlier the same after-

noon by a vote of 27,837 to 108, only 8 delegates daring to vote against the motion to unseat him.

The "amalgamation" resolution would have been voted down WITHOUT ANY DEBATE AT ALL had not James Duncan of Seattle added to the disgrace already brought upon the Seattle labor movement by rising to make a speech against "amalgamation" which was so evidently an attempt to curry favor with the Gompers machine that even the enemies of the "amalgamation" movement showed their contempt for his cringing support of them.

Not a single voice was heard voting in favor of "amalgamation."

CENTRAL BODIES SNUBBED AGAIN

The Central Labor Union has long been a thorn in the side of the A. F. of L. The International presidents would undoubtedly like to eliminate local central labor bodies from the A. F. of L. structure. The reason for this is because a local central labor body that really tries to function and becomes the least active in organizing the workers or fighting the boss is certain to run afoul of the authority of the International unions.

Every convention of the A. F. of L. reveals conflicts between active central labor bodies and the officialdom of some of the International unions. Gompers has always tried to keep the central bodies from annoying the officialdom by their activities and as a consequence the average A. F. of L. central body is merely a discussion club, often not even that. So long as delegates to a central body merely meet and smoke and talk and pass resolutions they are harmless and in keeping with the character of the A. F. of L.

The fact is that a central labor union in a well-organized city is the nearest approach to a Soviet that we have in America. It is a council of the organized working class of the community and theoretically it should be able to bring about the solidarity and united action of all the organized workers in that community. But just let a central labor union of the A. F. of L. try any such thing. Immediately the power and control of the International officials is felt and the workers united through the central labor union are divided into a hundred fragments with no power whatever of united action. Then the fight begins.

That is the situation that brought about the conflict between the Seattle Central Labor Council and the A. F. of L. The Seattle workers tried to make their central body function and for a time they did some good work, but when the officialdom began to curb them, they retreated instead of going forward as Winnipeg did in 1919.

LADY BARBERS MUST NOT ORGANIZE

The attitude of the A. F. of L. toward activity by central bodies was shown when a resolution sponsored by the Seattle and Minneapolis central labor unions calling upon the A. F. of L. to organize the lady barbers, came up. In Seattle the lady barbers organized 100 per cent and were admitted into the Central Labor Council. They established the best job conditions in the shops they control to be found in any barber shops in the country, but the International Journeymen Barbers Union refused to take them in. The officials of this union are trying to drive women out of

the "profession" on the ground that they are not competent and do not become "artists," so the union draws the line against the female sex.

The women continue to break into the "tonsorial profession" in ever increasing numbers, however, and the Seattle Central Labor Council tried to deal with that fact. The result was that the council was forced to expel the delegates of the lady barbers and the convention overwhelmingly backed up the decree of President Fischer, of the Journeymen Barbers, "that the lady barbers must not be organized by the A. F. of L."

There is absolutely no solution for a situation like this except secession from the A. F. of L. If the Seattle unionists in 1919 had rallied round their central body and resisted the authority of the International officials by seceding from their various internationals the Seattle labor movement would, today, be in a strong and healthy condition instead of in the state of decay that it is.

Another proposition from the central bodies that was voted down by the convention was one to COMPEL all local unions in any locality to become affiliated with the Central Labor Union and with the State Federation of Labor. This proposal was not fostered by the radicals so much as by some of the reactionary politicians who are finding it difficult to play their political game through the central and state bodies without sufficient funds and their only purpose was to try and increase the per capita going to the central bodies.

The International presidents saw the dangers however, and the resolution was vigorously opposed by W. D. Mahon, head of the street railway men, and several other international officials.

They made it clear that ANY move that in ANY way tended to strengthen the central bodies would be fought and beaten. It would not be a great surprise if some future A. F. of L. convention took steps to wipe out the central bodies completely.

SYMPATHETIC STRIKES FORBIDDEN

In 1920, when I attended the A. F. of L. convention in Montreal, the problem of curbing central bodies was even more acute than now. At that time the Central Labor Union of Salem, Mass., brought in a resolution asking the A. F. of L. to prevail upon the various International unions to call a general strike in the district north of Boston to aid the striking machinists of the United Shoe Machinery Company at Beverly.

The usual overwhelming defeat of the resolution was followed by the loss of the strike and the complete collapse of the labor movement in that section. This has been the experience of the workers in the A. F. of L. all over the country. In hundreds of places during the past ten or fifteen years local central bodies have tried to function by bringing about sympathetic general strikes in support of some affiliated group that was making a fight for better job conditions. Always such efforts have been killed by the A. F. of L.

When such a situation arises the hopelessness of the A. F. of L. is revealed and invariably the disillusionment and disgust of the defeated workers results in their abandoning the labor movement. The only course which may save a locality that has encountered the stagnating influence

of A. F. of L. official domination is for the locals affiliated with such central bodies to secede from their internationals and transform their central labor union into a Central Labor Council of the One Big Union. This was proven at Winnipeg

Old Andrew Furuseth, of the Seamen's Union, sounded the warning note to his fellow international presidents when he denounced the desire of the Seattle central body to organize the lady barbers as an attempt to promote the One Big Union idea. Furuseth also brought in a resolution on the last day calling upon the A. F. of L. to conduct an investigation of the I.W.W., charging that two-thirds of its membership is made up of private detectives operating in the interests of the Shipping Board.

The explanation of this final frothing spasm of witch-finding indulged in by Furuseth and unanimously approved by the convention is found in the fact that Furuseth's union is rapidly melting away. The International Seamen's Union has lost nearly 90 per cent of its membership in the last two years. By their own report, 85,400 members have deserted "Andy" since 1921. While it is true that about ten thousand of these seamen have had the good sense to join the I.W.W. instead of falling into the usual pessimistic disorganized state, most of these thousands of seamen simply quit because they could no longer stand the rotten corruption and weakness of the A. F. of L. and the official domination of old Furuseth.

THE RECORD OF DECAY

The condition of the Seamen's Union is typical of nearly every International union of the A. F. of L. that has had any numerical strength among workers really engaged in the important industrial activities of the country.

The report of the Executive Council confesses to a loss of 262,000 members during the past year. The figures submitted here are based upon the per capita tax paid to the A. F. of L. It is well known that for many years a number of unions have paid per capita to the A. F. of L. far in excess of their actual membership in order that their delegates may have increased voting power in A. F. of L. conventions, where the votes allowed to each delegate is based upon the amount of per capita his organization pays to the federation. This per capita is small and certain organizations have been in the habit of paying annually a lump sum to the federation regardless of what their actual membership is.

For example, the Bricklayers' Union has paid per capita for exactly 70,000 members for the past ten years although they probably have never had nearly that many bricklayers organized in America and have certainly lost a good many members during the last few years. But they have a big treasury and can easily afford to pay the per capita that gives their delegation 700 votes in every A. F. of L. convention.

DUNCAN DRUNK BUT TRUTHFUL

The Glass Bottle Blowers have paid per capita for exactly 10,000 members for a similar period of time. The Granite Cutters' Union of which James A. Duncan, First Vice-President of the A. F. of L., is International President, has paid per capita on 10,000 for more than ten years

although Duncan himself was heard to say to one of the British fraternal delegates in the Multnomah Hotel that his union was "dead" when the delegate inquired about the condition of the Granite Cutters. And they say that Duncan was not quite sober at the time, so he was probably telling the truth, as some men do when they are drunk.

The United Hatters, Metal Lathers, Plumbers, Stage Employees, Tailors, Street Railway Men, Photo-Engravers, Bill Posters, United Garment Workers and a number of other organizations always pay per capita upon the same number, with never any fluctuation, and it is well known in some cases that the number has always been far in excess of the actual membership in order to give these organizations voting power in the convention.

As most of these organizations are always found supporting every reactionary measure of the Gompers machine, it is easy to understand the method in this matter of inflating membership to get votes in the convention.

MORE THAN A MILLION LOSS

In spite of this inflation of membership the official report shows that the A. F. of L. has lost more than a million members since 1920, while a fair estimate of the actual loss in the last three years would be nearer a million and a half.

The following figures, showing loss in membership, taken from the official report shows how the A. F. of L. has crumbled since 1920:

Seamen's Union—Loss 85,400 members, about 90%.

United Textile Workers—Loss 74,900, about 75%.

Blacksmiths' International—Loss 45,000 members since 1921, about 90%

Boilermakers—Loss 73,600 since 1920, about 75%.

Brotherhood of Railway Clerks—Loss 90,000, about 50%.

Hotel & Restaurant Employees—Loss 22,000, about 40%.

Amalgamated Iron, Steel & Tin Workers—Loss 19,800, about 65%.

Longshoremen—Loss 39,700, about 60%.

Machinists—Loss 233,500, about 70%.

Meat Cutters & Butchers—Loss 54,900, about 80%.

Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers—Loss 13,000, about 60%.

Oil Field Workers—Loss 22,300, about 92%.

Painters—Loss 20,500, about 20%.

Moulders—Loss 26,400, about 50%.

Maintenance of Way Employees—Loss 16,500, about 35%.

Railway Carmen—Loss 40,000, about 20% since 1921.

Bridge & Structural Iron Workers—Loss since 1920, 10,000, about 50%

Teamsters—Loss 38,100, about 35%.

Tobacco Workers—Loss 13,300, about 90%.

International Ladies Garment Workers—Loss 14,200, about 15%.

United Mine Workers—Loss 20,800, about 5%.

United Leather Workers—Loss 9,700, about 85%.

Pulp, Sulphite & Paper Mill Workers—Loss 6,700, about 65%.

Switchmen's Union—Loss 3,300, about 25%.

Railroad Signalmen—Loss 3,400, about 25%.

Piano & Organ Workers—Loss 2,500, about 75%.

Jewelry Workers—Loss 5,900, about 75%.

Masters, Mates & Pilots—Loss 3,000, about 35%.

Brotherhood of Paper Makers—Loss 3,700, about 35%.

The Carpenters have lost 16,000 members, according to their report, which is no doubt greatly padded in order to keep their vote of more than three thousand in the convention, as it is certain that a great many carpenters left the organization during the "open shop" drive and only a small percentage of them were won back during the building boom that some cities in the United States have experienced.

The Brewery Workers, Bookbinders, Retail Clerks, Stationary Firemen, and Teachers have each lost about one-half their membership since 1920, while the Timberworkers, which had over 10,000 members in 1920, has been wiped out entirely and is reported as having **DISBANDED**.

The Metal Polishers have lost 3,300 members or about one-third.

The losses among those local unions directly affiliated with the Federation total 91,700 members, or more than 60% of the total membership so affiliated.

BOOT AND SHOE REPORT FALSE

The Boot & Shoe Workers Union report a loss of only 6,800 members since 1920. These figures are unqualifiedly false as their report shows that they lost only 300 members in the past year, while it is well known that the Brockton strike last June carried about 13,000 members out of the Boot and Shoe, not more than 75% of whom have been forced back into that notorious "company union," although the strike was broken and the manufacturers are forcing the workers to pay dues to the Boot and Shoe in order to work in the Brockton district. The Boot and Shoe has probably lost at least 5,000 members during the past year, making a total loss of about 30% of their organization since 1920.

The Brockton strikers, however, claimed that all previous membership figures of the Boot and Shoe were greatly padded and that the Brockton district comprised about 70% of the total membership, so the real loss sustained by the Boot and Shoe since 1920 would probably be at least one-half.

The Typographical Union, in spite of its closed shop and job trust conditions, has lost 6,700 members since 1920, so it can be seen that even the most strongly entrenched of the craft unions are decaying.

The Jewelry Workers, figures are interesting. This organization was thrown out of the A. F. of L. at Montreal as a result of a jurisdictional fight and now has crawled back into the fold with 75% of its membership gone. In 1920 it was represented at Montreal by Sam Beardsley, a Socialist who as president of the organization was counted one of the progressive "borers" for industrial unionism within the A. F. of L. I don't know what has become of "Sam," but his "progressive" union sent as its representative to this convention one of the slimiest rats I've ever seen in a so-called labor gathering, a fellow named Goldstein, who distinguished himself by making a charge that "Bill" Dunne was a member of the Ku

Klux Klan and getting the protection of Gompers' gavel when Dunne tried to get the floor to answer his charge.

If the rank and file of the Jewelry Workers had gone ahead to the O.B.U. in 1920 and left Goldstein and his handful of remaining members to go back to the A. F. of L., those workers would now have an effective organization in the United States.

THE DISEASE INCURABLE

A study of the above figures will show that most of the unions in the A. F. of L. that are composed of workers in any of the important trades or industries of the country, have been reduced to a state of helplessness and there is nothing to indicate that any of them can hope to recover. In fact the evidence of decay is appearing now, more than ever before, among those organizations that have long been strongly entrenched with closed shop job conditions and the figures do not begin to show the pitiful weakness of organized labor in America as it is expressed through the organizations represented at this convention.

The extent of decay since 1920 was surprising to me, as I had been led to believe that although great losses of membership had marked the history of the past three years, there was a compensating increase of rank and file enlightenment and the movements for "amalgamation" and other "progressive" ideas such as a labor party, Russian recognition, etc., were making great headway in the A. F. of L.

If that were really true there should be some reflection of it in an A. F. of L. convention, but the fact I found was that even the "progressives" have been pretty generally eliminated or absorbed.

Of the "old guard" of anti-Gompers delegates there remained only one who took the floor with any vigor in support of the "progressive" measures, that one being Max Hayes of Cleveland. On the other hand, I found the miners now solidly lined up with the Gompers machine and delegates like John H. Walker and James Duncan of Seattle taking a stand with the reactionaries, while the real "borers from within," who were strongly represented at the Montreal convention, had but one representative in Portland to raise his voice on the floor.

That one was "Bill" Dunne of Butte, and he "bored" so well that he "bored" out before any of the real business of the convention began.

In my next and concluding article on this convention I will try to analyze the condition of the American labor movement as revealed by this convention and the course it has followed since the Montreal convention in 1920.

I came away from Portland more firmly convinced than ever that **SECESSION** and the building up of the **ONE BIG UNION** is the proper course to pursue.

THE FUTILITY OF FOSTERISM

The Portland Convention of the American Federation of Labor not only established a new record for re-action as pointed out in my last article, but also went to greater lengths than any previous convention to prove that the American Federation of Labor is an ally of the capitalist class on this continent.

In all the forty-two years of its existence this organization has not made a more strenuous effort to further the idea of the "identity of interests" between the workers and the employers than was made at Portland.

The first week of the convention went to extraordinary lengths to create the impression that the A. F. of L. is not only a patriotic body but is friendly to the employers as a class. This was revealed in every speech that was made and in the staging of the programme of special addresses by "distinguished visitors" throughout the convention.

Starting with the usual addresses of welcome by the Mayor of Portland, a notorious anti-labor politician of the type of ex-Mayor Ole Hanson, of Seattle, and the Governor of the State of Oregon, the addresses made to the convention were all marked by their emphasis of the point that the interests of master and slave are "identical."

The Governor of Oregon, emphasized it, Gompers seconded it and even Hodges of the British Miners, who was once a Socialist, revealed it in speeches. Then, to strengthen the impression they put on the platform a Welfare worker, three clergymen, an American Legion commander and a General of the U.S. Army, besides the reading of a telegram from Secretary of Labor Davis and the delivering of a message, through Gompers, from President Calvin Coolidge, whose berth in the White House is the reward of his services against labor in the state of Massachusetts.

BERRY BETRAYAL FEATURED

One of the special features of the first week was the speech made by Major George L. Berry, International President of the Printing Pressmen's Union, in which he told how he had broken the strike of the web pressmen against the newspapers of New York City, by filling the places of the striking pressmen with union pressmen from other cities.

This open flaunting of the activities of a union scab-herder, and notoriously corrupt official, was applauded to the echo by the convention.

The charge made by Dunne, the lone Communist delegate, who was expelled from the convention, that the convention was trying to take a more conservative position than the capitalists themselves, was fully justified by the utterances of the various delegates and their action upon all matters that came before the convention.

Not a single thing was done by the convention from start to finish that could possibly be interpreted as hostile to the employers.

In view of that I marvel at the suggestion made to me by Dunne that the organized employers of America may yet completely destroy the A. F. of L. Instead of any such possibility it seems to me quite logical and certain that the employers will **PRESERVE** the A. F. of L. just as long as they can and I'm sure that if there were any danger of it dying out entirely they would spend millions to keep it alive.

In all its important sections, it is functioning today as a "company union" and the attitude of all honest unionists toward it should be the same as that taken against all other "company unions."

In Montreal in 1920 there was still some pretense of division made on the surface of things between such elements in the Federation as the

Miners and the Carpenters, but today there is no longer any such pretense.

John L. Lewis stood solidly with Gompers and with Hutcheson of the Carpenters on every proposition before the convention. There was absolute harmony among all the International officials upon every matter of policy.

NO MORE "PROGRESSIVES"

The mine workers' delegation with its more than four thousand votes in the convention had often in the past opposed the Gompers' machine, but at Portland the mine workers led the machine in all its efforts to keep the Federation conservative.

This was merely a reflection of the fact that in many parts of the continent during the last year the United Mine Workers has proven to be the most thorough-going "company union" on the continent. The miners of Nova Scotia, Alberta, Ohio, Kansas, and the Pittsburg and anthracite districts can testify to that fact. In all these places, the Lewis official machine has openly served the interests of the mine operators and to cap the climax of treachery, the official journal of the U.M.W. of A., entirely controlled by Lewis and Green, published a series of articles that may yet have the effect of delivering the miners of Herrin, Ill., who executed a few scabs that had murdered some striking miners, up to the hangman. These articles were written after a jury in Illinois had fully exonerated the Herrin miners and acquitted them when the mine owners attempted to have them hanged for murder.

Lewis, in a speech to the convention told how he had crushed the O.B.U. among the miners in Canada and declared that the Canadian districts had been re-organized and were now 100% loyal to the U.M.W. of A. This in spite of the fact that at the very time he was talking, the Nova Scotia miners were calling a district conference in Halifax to consider what action the district could take against the attempt of Lewis to re-organize the district so as to regain control of it, while in the Alberta district only three weeks before it had been found necessary for Lewis to revoke seven local charters of rebellious locals that he was claiming were 100% loyal to him.

In the three years between the Montreal convention and this one at Portland the so-called "progressives" have been almost entirely eliminated from the A. F. of L.

I looked through the list of delegates in vain for many old-time opponents of the Gompers' machine. They were conspicuous by their absence.

I looked for some evidence that the claims of great headway made by the followers of Foster in the various international unions would be demonstrated by the presence of "amalgamationists" and supporters of the Foster movement at the convention. They were also conspicuous by their absence.

The convention fully revealed the weakness and futility of the Foster programme. The net results of three years of strenuous effort by the Foster forces to save the A. F. of L. from decay may fairly be shown by the loss of about a million members and the elimination of the mili-

tants from the A. F. of L. convention. When Dunne was expelled the last Foster champion who dared to take the floor at Portland was thrown out of the A. F. of L.

I read in the October Labor Herald that "sluggings, disfranchisements, expulsions, splits," have been the harvest reaped by the "boring-from-within" policy so far and this was fully reflected in the A. F. of L. convention. The crop of "amalgamation resolutions" that have been passed by international organizations and central labor councils and local unions proved to be worth less than the paper they were written on.

The convention revealed the Foster support to be so pitifully weak that after Dunne was expelled there was not one delegate in Portland with guts enough to take the floor and speak in favor of any kind of "amalgamation" resolution.

In spite of the tremendous amount of propaganda spread by Foster in the last three years the A. F. of L. has weakened more than in any three years in its history and more significant than that the militancy within the A. F. of L. has DECREASED more than ever in its history.

WILL RANK AND FILE AWAKEN?

In view of these incontestable facts there is but one sane course for all militants in the labor unions on this continent to pursue and that is to frankly admit that the "amalgamation idea" will not work and, as all pragmatists do when they discover a thing will not work, discard it and set about the building of a real labor movement in America.

Had this been done three years ago instead of following the Foster "will-o-the-wisp" such a movement would already be well under way in America. The hundreds of thousands that are leaving the A. F. of L. every year would then have something else to go to and it would not take very long to build an American labor movement that would command the respect of the world.

The One Big Union in Canada took that course and have successfully resisted all efforts to destroy it. The Lawrence workers took that course and have demonstrated their ability to function through the O.B.U. in the fight against the mill-owners, not only winning ground for themselves, but for hundreds of thousands of unorganized workers in the textile towns as well.

These workers of Western Canada and New England have laid the foundation for the new movement. The I.W.W. in the western part of the United States and on the seas and important ports throughout the world has survived and should be a part of that movement. Scores of so-called "independent" unions in various localities and districts also have a genuine desire to serve the working class and should be a part of that movement; but there is not a vestige of hope that any of the existing international unions composing the A. F. of L. can ever be changed or captured or controlled by anyone but the employers and so it becomes a sheer waste of energy to stay within those organizations and try to prevent their decay, while fighting for the passage of empty resolutions endorsing things that the American Federation of Labor will never stand for.

THE FALL OF FOSTER

When I attended the Montreal convention in 1920, Foster was in high favor around the convention hall. He was a conspicuous figure around the lobby and among the groups of delegates. I met him in the lobby after the roll call vote on the Plumb Plan resolution showed that Gompers had been defeated by a combination of the Miners' and the Railroad Unions and Foster said to me in great glee, "You see what we're doing? We've put the skids under the 'old man' (meaning Gompers)."

That was three years ago and the only result of the "skids" put under Gompers by Foster and his friends has been to slide the "old man" into a safer position than ever before in control of the A. F. of L.

On the other hand the Portland convention revealed the extent of Foster's "fall from grace." He was advertised to visit Portland during the convention, but for some reason he failed to appear and his speaking dates were filled by "Bill" Dunne. Had he appeared, however, it is certain that he would not have been favored with the attention he got at Montreal and he would probably have found less than half a dozen delegates in the convention with courage enough to be seen in public with him.

We also heard the story upon the convention floor of how the Chicago Federation of Labor, to which he has always pointed with pride as a "progressive" central organization, resulting from the effectiveness of his "boring," has now completely repudiated him and led by his old friends, Fitzpatrick and Nockels, gone over completely to the Gompers' machine.

During the steel strike Foster told me one day in Pittsburg that "Gompers was not so bad" and that he was "merely a reflection of the mental attitude of the rank and file in the A. F. of L., and always had been." That was his justification at that time for working with the labor fakir of the A. F. of L., and if Foster was right this convention shows that years of "amalgamation" propaganda has made the rank and file of the A. F. of L. more re-actionary and hopeless than ever in its history.

The truth is, however, that Foster was wrong then in his analysis of Gompers and is wrong now in his analysis of the American labor movement. Gompers has never represented anything except the mental attitude of the employers that have always dictated the policies of the A. F. of L. and taken good care that its structure will make it forever impossible for the "rank and file" of workers, that have been misled into joining its various "international unions," to express themselves.

A ROMANTIC RUSSIAN PICTURE

In Foster's "Labor Herald" for October I find the following report of a speech delivered by Losovsky, the head of the Red International of Labor Unions, to the first session of the Enlarged Executive of that body:

"In the United States the work of the R.I.L.U. has assumed a mass character. We are faced with a large movement headed by the Trade Union Educational League. Born only a couple of years ago, this League has made tremendous progress. It is successfully battling against the theory and tactics of dual unionism, i.e., of splitting

the trade union organizations, no matter what the cost. For the first time in the labor movement of America, a revolutionary wing has assumed real importance. The influence of the League grows steadily. It is now influencing, ideologically and politically, two millions of workers. This has frightened the reactionary leaders of the American trade union movement, and forced them to carry on a fierce struggle against the League. The small independent revolutionary unions existing alongside the League are trying in vain to compete with its influence.

"Even less capable of rivalling it is the I.W.W.

"This favorable situation of the League will encourage its leaders to do everything possible from an organizational point of view, in order to spread the influence to both the independent unions and the I.W.W. The struggle against dual unionism does not exclude the possibility of agreement with the existing revolutionary independent unions. The chief problem there is the further consolidation of the League, the extension of its influence beyond the A. F. of L., the struggle for industrial unionism, the creation of Committees of Action and the overthrow of the most reactionary trade union bureaucracy in the world. All this can be accomplished, provided the League pursues the present policy towards the elements standing outside it."

I am amazed to think of such utterances coming from Russians, who are supposed to be realists. In the sixteen years I have been in the Labor movement I have never encountered a more wildly romantic picture of conditions anywhere. Even Foster was forced to admit to the T.U.E.L. convention that "this was a rather rosy picture of the T.U.E.L."

But he did not have the honesty to admit that this extravagant and distorted idea of conditions on this continent has been given to the Russian leaders by the utterly false and misleading reports that have been steadily poured into Russia by all the organs on this continent that are supporting the Foster programme and by all the leading advocates of that programme, everyone of whom knows well, how far from the truth is the description of the American situation given by Losovsky.

When one reads such fulsome praise of the T.U.E.L. and such an extravagant picture of the prospects for Fosterism within the A. F. of L. as painted by Losovsky and contrasts it with the cold reality, one is forced to conclude that all the Russian leaders are certainly not realists and that the R.I.L.U. needs a more rationalistic sort of mind to interpret conditions in other countries than that revealed by Losovsky.

The Unpromising Reality

The "tremendous progress" of the T.U.E.L. has been like that of a crab. It was very well displayed in the Portland convention of the A. F. of L.; but lest some may fall for the reports published by Foster and think that in spite of the showing of complete failure made at Portland, this movement is really influencing "two millions of workers," I want to record that I have just finished a three months' trip across the continent and the only place I found any evidence of the existence of the T.U.E.L. was in Chicago, where I attended one of its "great mass meetings" at

which there were about three hundred people and most of them were NOT trade unionists but young boys and girls from the ranks of what was once the "Yipsels" of the old Socialist Party.

In Canada, from which glowing reports come, signed by one Tim Buck, I found no evidence that there is any life left in the Foster movement at all, though two years ago it made strenuous effort, backed up by the Manitoba Employers' Association, the Canadian government, the Canadian Pacific Railroad and various other agencies, to destroy the One Big Union and failed dismally. In all of the places that I have spoken in Canada and challenged the position of the Fosterites, I did not find a single advocate of the T.U.E.L. who would ask me a question or dare to enter into any discussion of their tactics.

The damage done in Canada by the Foster propaganda has undoubtedly hurt the working class movement in that country from Coast to Coast and particularly in the Nova Scotia district; but the O.B.U. has survived the flood of Foster propaganda as well as the attacks of the employers and the industrial depression and remains the only thing in Canada that offers any hope to the working class.

T.U.E.L. TACTICS FAIL

I met one T.U.E.L. organizer in Calgary addressing a meeting of the "militants" of Calgary. When I arrived at the meeting place with a couple of O.B.U. members I found five "militants" including another of our O.B.U. members and the speaker, Bartholomew. No effort was made at all by Bartholomew to refute any of my arguments against the T.U.E.L. policy and "Bart" afterward tried to convince me that he was really "boring-from-within" in the interest of the O.B.U., but in view of the malicious attacks that have been made upon the O.B.U., using the same propaganda against it as used by the Manitoba Employers' Association, it is not easy to believe in the sincerity of the alibi.

On the Pacific Coast, around Vancouver, the followers of Foster did succeed in breaking up the O.B.U.; though a share of the credit for that achievement should be given to the agents of the North West Mounted Police working "undercover," in the regular report to Moscow; and Losovsky should also be informed that after breaking up the O.B.U. they did not succeed in getting the slaves back into the A. F. of L., so the net result of the T.U.E.L. campaign in that sector has been the destruction of all working class organization and the consequent discouragement of the workers. The remaining vestiges of the A. F. of L. on the Vancouver waterfront is now in process of being destroyed by a typical A. F. of L. strike under T.U.E.L. leadership.

I looked in vain for evidences of Foster's "great movement" in Seattle; and in Portland the "wobblies" contributed most of the audience gathered to hear Dunne and they were interested only in Dunne's attack upon the A. F. of L. and not at all in the policy of trying to "crawl in the back door" after being kicked out of the A. F. of L.

Here, in San Francisco, where this article is being written, I have not yet discovered the T.U.E.L., though I've found healthier opposition to that futile policy and more promising prospects for a real One Big Union

movement than at any point I've visited on the Coast. And this is another point from which glowing and exaggerated reports are sent in to Foster by his romantic local lieutenant.

The T.U.E.L. has not only failed to influence "two millions" of American workers but it has failed to influence even a small minority of the militants in the American labor movement. Those militants will not go back to the A. F. of L. and those that still remain in the A. F. of L. are being thrown out so rapidly that the rest should profit by the lesson and leave the sinking ship. If all these elements, instead of wasting time and energy, following Foster, would then set about building a real labor movement in America on the foundation laid by the One Big Union there would soon be something really hopeful to report to the rest of the world and Losovsky would not have to strain his imagination so terribly in picturing the conditions of the labor movement in America.

The final truth about the T.U.E.L. is that it really amounts to nothing more in America than a fairly efficient machine for sustaining the circulation of Foster's monthly, "The Labor Herald."

